

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1                   1. A process for selecting a first sales pitch appropriate for a particular  
2 telephone caller, the process comprising:  
3                   receiving a call from a caller;  
4                   accessing information about the caller gathered prior to the call; and  
5                   automatically selecting a first sales pitch appropriate for the caller based upon  
6 the information accessed about the caller.

1                   2. The process of claim 1 wherein the first sales pitch is automatically selected  
2 before the call is transferred to a human operator.

1                   3. The process of claim 1 wherein the first sales pitch is automatically selected  
2 only when the information accessed about the caller indicates that the caller satisfies certain  
3 predetermined criteria.

1                   4. The process of claim 2 wherein accessing the information about the caller  
2 includes accessing a geographic residence of the caller, and automatically selecting the first  
3 sales pitch includes making a sales pitch unavailable for selection for the caller based upon  
4 the geographic residence of the caller.

1                   5. The process of claim 2 wherein accessing the information about the caller  
2 includes accessing a credit status for the caller, and automatically selecting a first sales pitch  
3 includes selecting the first sales pitch for a caller only when the caller is determined to have a  
4 satisfactory credit status.

1                   6. The process of claim 1 wherein accessing information about the caller  
2 includes acquiring and storing a response by the caller to the selected first sales pitch as part  
3 of the information about the caller.

1                   7. The process of claim 1 further comprising presenting the first sales pitch to  
2 the caller, and wherein accessing information about the caller includes acquiring and storing  
3 information reflecting a response to the first sales pitch by the caller as part of the  
4 information about the caller immediately after the caller provides the response to the first  
5 sales pitch.

1                   8. The process of claim 7 further comprising selecting a second sales pitch for  
2 the caller immediately after the caller provides the response to the first sales pitch, wherein  
3 the second sales pitch is selected automatically based on the information accessed about the  
4 caller including the information reflecting the response by the caller to the first sales pitch.

1                   9. The process of claim 8 wherein the second sales pitch is provided to the  
2 caller during the phone call if the response by the caller to the first sales pitch was favorable.

1                   10. The process of claim 9 wherein the second sales pitch is provided to the  
2 caller during the phone call if the response by the caller to the first sales pitch was not  
3 favorable.

1                   11. The process of claim 1 wherein accessing information about the caller  
2 includes acquiring and storing information about the caller before receiving the call from the  
3 caller and wherein the stored information about the caller is accessed automatically upon  
4 receiving the call from the caller.

1                   12. The process of claim 1 wherein the information accessed about the caller  
2 comprises historical information based on responses made by the caller in response to past  
3 sales pitch offers.

1                   13. The process of claim 1 wherein the information accessed about the caller  
2 comprises historical information based on past misbehavior of the caller, and wherein the  
3 past misbehavior includes a violation by the caller of a terms of service agreement associated  
4 with an account of the caller.

1                   14. The process of claim 1 wherein the information accessed about the caller  
2 comprises information regarding current enrollment by the caller in products or services  
3 offered by a commercial partner.

1                   15. The process of claim 1 wherein the information accessed about the caller  
2 comprises information relating to an address of the caller such that the first sales pitch is  
3 selected automatically based on the information relating to the address of the caller.

1                   16. The process of claim 1 further comprising:  
2                   presenting the selected first sales pitch to the caller; and  
3                   transferring the caller to a commercial partner that provides a product or  
4 service that corresponds to the selected first sales pitch if the caller has expressed interest in  
5 the first sales pitch.

1                   17. The process of claim 16 further comprising communicating information  
2 accessed about the caller to the commercial partner substantially in real time.

1                   18. The process of claim 17 wherein the information comprises a name of the  
2 caller.

1                   19. The process of claim 17 wherein the information comprises an address and  
2 telephone number of the caller.

1                   20. The process of claim 17 wherein the information comprises information  
2 regarding the first sales pitch presented to the caller.

1                   21. The process of claim 17 wherein the information comprises information  
2 regarding the response by the caller to the first sales pitch presented to the caller.

1                   22. The process of claim 1, further comprising:

transferring the caller to a commercial partner that provides a product or service that corresponds to the selected first sales pitch, wherein the commercial partner provides a second sales pitch to the caller; and

receiving feedback information from the commercial partner regarding a response by the caller to the second sales pitch after the response to the second sales pitch is received from the caller by the commercial partner.

23. The process of claim 22 wherein the commercial partner provides the feedback information regarding the response by the caller immediately after the response to the second sales pitch is received from the caller by the commercial partner.

24. The process of claim 23 wherein the feedback information is stored as information accessed about the caller to be used for selecting sales pitches in the future.

25. The process of claim 1 wherein automatically selecting the first sales pitch comprises:

automatically determining a pool of available sales pitches for the caller including all sales pitches for which the caller has not been indicated ineligible by the information accessed about the caller; and

randomly selecting the first sales pitch from the pool of available sales pitches.

26. The process of claim 25 wherein automatically selecting further includes removing a sales pitch from the pool of available sales pitches after the sales pitch is selected at random from the pool of available sales pitches and the information accessed about the caller indicates that the caller is ineligible for the randomly selected sales pitch.

27. The process of claim 25 wherein each sales pitch within the pool of available sales pitches has an equal probability of random selection when the random selection is made.

1                   28. The process of claim 25 wherein the pool of available sales pitches  
2 comprises sub-pools of available sales pitches that each have an associated parameter that  
3 defines the likelihood that a sales pitch will be selected from the sub-pool of sales pitches  
4 when the random selection is made.

1                   29. The process of claim 1 wherein automatically selecting the first sales pitch  
2 comprises:  
3                   automatically determining a pool of available sales pitches for the caller  
4 including only those sales pitches for which the caller is eligible as indicated by the  
5 information accessed about the caller; and  
6                   randomly selecting the first sales pitch from the pool of available sales  
7 pitches.

1                   30. The process of claim 29 wherein automatically determining the pool of  
2 available sales pitches for the caller includes selecting available sales pitches for the caller  
3 based upon a caller preference indicated by the information accessed about the caller.

1                   31. The process of claim 1 wherein automatically selecting the first sales pitch  
2 comprises:  
3                   automatically comparing the information accessed about the caller to a sales  
4 pitch profile associated with a sales pitch; and  
5                   generating a comparison result based upon the comparison of the information  
6 accessed about the caller and the sales pitch profile.

1                   32. The process of claim 31 further comprising determining and storing the  
2 sales pitch profile before comparing the information accessed about the caller to the sales  
3 pitch profile associated with the sales pitch.

1                   33. The process of claim 32 further comprising accessing the sales pitch  
2 profile after determining and storing the sales pitch profile and prior to comparing the  
3 information accessed about the caller to the sales pitch profile associated with the sales pitch.

1                   34. The process of claim 31 further comprising determining a sales pitch  
2                   profile having an acceptable comparison result and selecting a sales pitch associated with the  
3                   sales pitch profile having the acceptable comparison result as the first sales pitch.

1                   35. The process of claim 1 further comprising storing a relationship between  
2                   products and services of one commercial partner to sales pitches corresponding to products  
3                   and services of another commercial partner prior to receiving the call from the caller,  
4                   wherein automatically selecting includes accessing the relationship between products and  
5                   services of the one commercial partner to sales pitches corresponding to products and  
6                   services of the other commercial partner.

1                   36. A system for selecting a first sales pitch appropriate for a particular  
2                   telephone caller, the system comprising:  
3                   receiving means for receiving a call from a caller;  
4                   accessing means for accessing information about the caller gathered prior to  
5                   the call; and  
6                   selecting means for automatically selecting a first sales pitch appropriate for  
7                   the caller based upon the information accessed about the caller.

1                   37. The system of claim 36 further comprising transferring means for  
2                   transferring the call to a human operator, and wherein the first sales pitch is selected  
3                   automatically by the selecting means before the transferring means transfers the call to the  
4                   human operator.

1                   38. The system of claim 36 wherein the first sales pitch is selected  
2                   automatically by the selecting means only when the information accessed about the caller by  
3                   the accessing means indicates that the caller satisfies certain predetermined criteria.

1                   39. The system of claim 37 wherein the accessing means accesses information  
2                   indicating a geographic residence of the caller, and the selecting means automatically makes

a sales pitch unavailable for selection for a caller based upon the geographic residence of the caller.

40. The system of claim 37 wherein the accessing means also accesses a credit status for the caller and the selecting means selects a first sales pitch for the caller only when the credit status of the caller satisfies predetermined credit criteria.

41. The system of claim 36 wherein the accessing means includes an acquiring means for acquiring a response by the caller to the selected first sales pitch and a storing means for storing the acquired response by the caller as part of the information about the caller.

42. The system of claim 36, further comprising a presenting means for presenting the first sales pitch to the caller, and wherein the accessing means includes an acquiring means for acquiring a response by the caller to the selected first sales pitch and a storing means for storing the acquired response by the caller as part of the information about the caller immediately after the caller provides the response to the first sales pitch .

43. The system of claim 42, further comprising a second selecting means for selecting a second sales pitch for the caller immediately after the caller provides the response to the first sales pitch, wherein the second sales pitch is selected automatically based on the information accessed by the accessing means about the caller including the information reflecting the response by the caller to the first sales pitch.

44. The system of claim 36 wherein the accessing means includes an acquiring means for acquiring information about the caller and a storing means for storing the acquired information about the caller before the receiving means receives the call from the caller and wherein the accessing means also includes a retrieving means for automatically retrieving the stored information accessed about the caller upon receiving the call from the caller.

45. The system of claim 36 wherein the information that the accessing means accesses about the caller comprises historical information based on responses made by the caller in response to past sales pitch offers.

46. The system of claim 36 wherein the information that the accessing means accesses about the caller comprises historical information based on past misbehavior of the caller, and wherein the past misbehavior includes a violation by the caller of a terms of service agreement associated with an account of the caller.

47. The system of claim 36 wherein the information that the accessing means accesses about the caller comprises information regarding current enrollment by the caller in products or services offered by a commercial partner.

48. The system of claim 36 further comprising:  
presenting means for presenting the selected first sales pitch to the caller; and  
transferring means for transferring the caller to a commercial partner that provides a product or service that corresponds to the selected first sales pitch if the caller has expressed interest in the first sales pitch.

49. The system of claim 48 further comprising communicating means for communicating information that the accessing means accesses about the caller to the commercial partner substantially in real time.

50. The system of claim 49 wherein the information communicated by the communicating means comprises information regarding the first sales pitch presented to the caller by the presenting means.

51. The system of claim 49 wherein the information communicated by the communicating means comprises information regarding the response by the caller to the first sales pitch presented to the caller by the presenting means.



52. The system of claim 36, further comprising:

transferring means for transferring the caller to a commercial partner that provides a product or service that corresponds to the selected first sales pitch, wherein the commercial partner provides a second sales pitch to the caller; and

feedback means for receiving feedback information from the commercial partner regarding a response by the caller to the second sales pitch after the response to the second sales pitch is received from the caller by the commercial partner.

53. The system of claim 52 wherein the commercial partner provides feedback information to the feedback means regarding the response by the caller almost immediately after the response to the second sales pitch is received from the caller by the commercial partner.

54. The system of claim 53 wherein the accessing means includes a storing means for storing the feedback information as part of the information about the caller to be used for selecting sales pitches in the future.

55. The system of claim 36 wherein the selecting means comprises:

a pool determination means for automatically determining a pool of available sales pitches for the caller including all sales pitches for which the caller has not been indicated ineligible by the information accessed by the accessing means about the caller; and

a random selection means for randomly selecting the first sales pitch from the pool of available sales pitches.

56. The system of claim 55 wherein the selecting means further includes a removing means for removing a sales pitch from the pool of available sales pitches after the sales pitch is selected at random from the pool of available sales pitches and the information accessed about the caller by the accessing means indicates that the caller is ineligible for the randomly selected sales pitch.

1           57. The system of claim 55 wherein the pool determination means includes a  
2 probability determination means for determining a probability of random selection for the  
3 sales pitches comprising the pool of available sales pitches so that each sales pitch within the  
4 pool of available sales pitches has an equal probability of random selection when a random  
5 selection is made.

1           58. The system of claim 55 wherein the pool determination means determines  
2 a pool of available sales pitches comprised of sub-pools of available sales pitches and  
3 wherein the probability determination means determines a probability associated with a sub-  
4 pool of available sales pitches that defines the likelihood that a sales pitch will be selected  
5 from the sub-pool of sales pitches when a random selection is made.

1           59. The system of claim 36 wherein the selecting means comprises:  
2 comparing means for automatically comparing the information accessed about  
3 the caller by the accessing means to a sales pitch profile associated with a sales pitch; and  
4 generating means for generating a comparison result based upon the  
5 comparison of the information accessed about the caller and the sales pitch profile.

1           60. The system of claim 59 further comprising:  
2 profile determining means for determining the sales pitch profile before the  
3 comparison by the comparing means;  
4 profile storing means for storing the sales pitch profile before the comparison  
5 by the comparing means; and  
6 profile accessing means for accessing the sales pitch profile before the  
7 comparison by the comparing means.

1           61. The system of claim 60 further comprising:  
2 acceptable profile determining means for determining a sales pitch profile  
3 having an acceptable comparison result; and  
4 sales pitch selecting means for selecting as the first sales pitch a sales pitch  
5 associated with the sales pitch profile having the acceptable comparison result.

62. The system of claim 36 further comprising a relationship storing means for storing a relationship between products and services of one commercial partner to sales pitches corresponding to products and services of another commercial partner prior to the receiving means receiving the call from the caller, wherein the selecting means includes accessing means for accessing the relationship between products and services of the one commercial partner to sales pitches corresponding to products and services of the other commercial partner.

63. A computer program stored on a computer readable medium or a propagated signal for selecting a first sales pitch appropriate for a particular telephone caller, the computer program comprising:

a receiving code segment that causes the computer to receive a call from a caller;

an accessing code segment that causes the computer to access information about the caller gathered prior to the call; and

a selecting code segment that causes the computer to automatically select a first sales pitch appropriate for the caller based upon the information accessed about the caller.

64. The computer program of claim 63 further comprising a transferring code segment that causes the computer to transfer the call to a human operator, and wherein the selecting code segment causes the computer to automatically select a first sales pitch before the transferring code segment causes the computer to transfer the call to the human operator.

65. The computer program of claim 63 wherein the selecting code segment causes the computer to automatically select the first sales pitch only when the information accessed about the caller indicates that the caller satisfies certain predetermined criteria.

66. The computer program of claim 64 wherein the accessing code segment causes the computer to access information indicating a geographic residence of the caller, and

the selecting code segment causes the computer to automatically make a sales pitch  
unavailable for selection for a caller based upon the geographic residence of the caller.

67. The computer program of claim 64 wherein the accessing code segment  
further causes the computer to access information indicating a credit status for the caller and  
the selecting code segment causes the computer to select a first sales pitch for the caller only  
when the credit status of the caller satisfies predetermined credit criteria.

68. The computer program of claim 63 wherein the accessing code segment  
includes:

an acquiring code segment that causes the computer to acquire a response by  
the caller to the selected first sales pitch; and

a storing code segment that causes the computer to store the acquired response  
by the caller as part of the information about the caller.

69. The computer program of claim 63, further comprising a presenting code  
segment that causes the computer to present the first sales pitch to the caller, and wherein the  
accessing code segment includes:

an acquiring code segment that causes the computer to acquire a response by  
the caller to the selected first sales pitch; and

a storing code segment that causes the computer to store the acquired response  
by the caller as part of the information about the caller immediately after the caller provides  
the response to the first sales pitch .

70. The computer program of claim 69, further comprising a second selecting  
code segment that causes the computer to select a second sales pitch for the caller  
immediately after the caller provides the response to the first sales pitch, wherein the  
computer selects the second sales pitch automatically based on the information that the  
accessing code segment causes the computer to access about the caller including the  
information reflecting the response by the caller to the first sales pitch.

71. The computer program of claim 63 wherein the accessing code segment includes:

an acquiring code segment that causes the computer to acquire information about the caller; and

a storing code segment that causes the computer to store the acquired information about the caller before the receiving code segment causes the computer to receive the call from the caller; and

wherein the accessing code segment also includes a retrieving code segment that causes the computer to automatically retrieve the stored information accessed about the caller upon receiving the call from the caller.

72. The computer program of claim 63 wherein the information that the accessing code segment causes the computer to access about the caller comprises historical information based on responses made by the caller in response to past sales pitch offers.

73. The computer program of claim 63 wherein the information that the accessing code segment causes the computer to access about the caller comprises historical information based on past misbehavior of the caller, and wherein the past misbehavior includes a violation by the caller of a terms of service agreement associated with an account of the caller.

74. The computer program of claim 63 wherein the information that the accessing code segment causes the computer to access about the caller comprises information regarding current enrollment by the caller in products or services offered by a commercial partner.

75. The computer program of claim 63 further comprising:  
a presenting code segment that causes the computer to present the selected first sales pitch to the caller; and

a transferring code segment that causes the computer to transfer the caller to a commercial partner that provides a product or service that corresponds to the selected first sales pitch if the caller has expressed interest in the first sales pitch.

76. The computer program of claim 75 further comprising a communicating code segment that causes the computer to communicate information accessed about the caller to the commercial partner substantially in real time.

77. The computer program of claim 76 wherein the information that the communicating code segment causes the computer to communicate comprises information regarding the first sales pitch presented to the caller.

78. The computer program of claim 76 wherein the information that the communicating code segment causes the computer to communicate comprises information regarding the response by the caller to the first sales pitch presented to the caller.

79. The computer program of claim 63, further comprising:  
a transferring code segment that causes the computer to transfer the caller to a commercial partner that provides a product or service that corresponds to the selected first sales pitch, wherein the commercial partner provides a second sales pitch to the caller; and  
a feedback code segment that causes the computer to receive feedback information from the commercial partner regarding a response by the caller to the second sales pitch after the response to the second sales pitch is received from the caller by the commercial partner.

80. The computer program of claim 79 wherein the feedback code segment causes the computer to receive feedback information provided by the commercial partner regarding the response by the caller almost immediately after the response to the second sales pitch is received from the caller by the commercial partner.

1                   81. The computer program of claim 80 wherein the accessing code segment  
2 includes a storing code segment that causes the computer to store the feedback information as  
3 part of the information about the caller to be used for selecting sales pitches in the future.

1                   82. The computer program of claim 63 wherein the selecting code segment  
2 comprises:

3                   a pool determination code segment that causes the computer to automatically  
4 determine a pool of available sales pitches for the caller including all sales pitches for which  
5 the caller has not been indicated ineligible by the information accessed about the caller; and

6                   a random selection code segment that causes the computer to randomly select  
7 the first sales pitch from the pool of available sales pitches.

1                   83. The computer program of claim 81 wherein the selecting code segment  
2 further includes a removing code segment that causes the computer to remove a sales pitch  
3 from the pool of available sales pitches after the sales pitch is selected at random from the  
4 pool of available sales pitches and the information accessed about the caller indicates that the  
5 caller is ineligible for the randomly selected sales pitch.

1                   84. The computer program of claim 82 wherein the pool determination code  
2 segment includes a probability determination code segment that causes the computer to  
3 determine a probability of random selection for the sales pitches comprising the pool of  
4 available sales pitches so that each sales pitch within the pool of available sales pitches has  
5 an equal probability of random selection when a random selection is made.

1                   85. The computer program of claim 82 wherein the pool determination code  
2 segment causes the computer to determine a pool of available sales pitches comprised of sub-  
3 pools of available sales pitches, and wherein the probability determination code segment  
4 causes the computer to determine a probability associated with a sub-pool of available sales  
5 pitches that defines the likelihood that a sales pitch will be selected from the sub-pool of  
6 sales pitches when a random selection is made.

1                   86. The computer program of claim 63 wherein the selecting code segment  
2 comprises:  
3                   a comparing code segment that causes the computer to automatically compare  
4 the information accessed about the caller to a sales pitch profile associated with a sales pitch;  
5 and  
6                   a generating code segment that causes the computer to generate a comparison  
7 result based upon the comparison of the information accessed about the caller and the sales  
8 pitch profile.

1                   87. The computer program of claim 86, wherein, before the comparing code  
2 segment causes the computer to automatically compare the information accessed about the  
3 caller to the sales pitch profile associated with the sales pitch, the computer program further  
4 comprises:  
5                   a profile determining code segment that causes the computer to determine the  
6 sales pitch profile;  
7                   a profile storing code segment that causes the computer to store the sales pitch  
8 profile; and  
9                   a profile accessing code segment that causes the computer to access the sales  
10 pitch profile.

1                   88. The computer program of claim 86 further comprising:  
2                   an acceptable profile determining code segment that causes the computer to  
3 determine a sales pitch profile having an acceptable comparison result; and  
4                   a sales pitch selecting code segment that causes the computer to select as the  
5 first sales pitch a sales pitch associated with the sales pitch profile having the acceptable  
6 comparison result.

1                   89. The computer program of claim 63 further comprising a relationship  
2 storing code segment that causes the computer to store a relationship between products and  
3 services of one commercial partner to sales pitches corresponding to products and services of  
4 another commercial partner prior to the receiving code segment causing the computer to



5 receive the call from the caller, wherein the selecting code segment includes an accessing  
6 code segment that causes the computer to access the relationship between products and  
7 services of the one commercial partner to sales pitches corresponding to products and  
8 services of the other commercial partner.